Business News

JDS Uniphase acquires UK fibre company

FOLLOWING on from the acquisition of Epitaxx Inc (Trenton, NJ, USA), JDS Uniphase Corp (San Jose, CA, USA) has acquired Sifam Ltd (Devon, UK) to augment its fibre optics business.

The US$97.2 million all-cash transaction is JDS Uniphase's fifth major acquisition this year. Sifam is a manufacturer of fibre optic components such as fused-coupler products, gain-flattening filters for high-capacity fibre optic networks as used in JDS Uniphase's fibre optic amplifier systems and modules.

Most recently, JDS Uniphase also acquired Canadian developer of optical amplifiers, test equipment and optoelectronic packaging, Oprel Technologies Inc. Oprel's product line includes erbium doped fibre amplifiers for networks and a full-line of test equipment. Oprel has also developed packaging for devices including diode laser and semiconductor optical amplifiers.

JDS Uniphase was formed from the merger of two fibre optic component suppliers: JDS Fitel Inc and Uniphase Corp. JDS Uniphase has since acquired a number of companies in the field:

- AFC Technologies Inc, a supplier of amplifier components,
- Epitaxx Inc, a supplier of optical detectors,
- Ramar Corp, a maker of optical components,
- Optical Coating Laboratory Inc, a supplier of thin-film coatings and components.

The latest acquisition expands the company's offerings in the fibre optic component business, which has grown from $2.5 million in 1975 to about $15 billion in 2000, according to ElectroniCast Corp (San Mateo, CA, USA).

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Device News

World's fastest digital IC is TRW's InP HBT frequency divider

AT the International Electron Devices Meeting (IEDM), TRW's Space & Electronics Group demonstrated what it claims to be the world's fastest digital IC: a frequency divider operating at a clock frequency of 69 GHz.

The IC has been fabricated using indium phosphide. "Superfast chips with digital processing speeds above 60 GHz are necessary for the next generation of fibre optic and wireless broadband telecom systems", says Dwight Streit, director of TRW Telecom Products. "These new systems will carry far greater volumes of Internet traffic than today's systems."

"Our 69 GHz frequency divider proves that such speeds are possible today. We have worked hard to develop InP into a high-yield manufacturable process. With performance capability exceeding anything else available today, InP will be used to enable a new generation of high-performance systems for the telecom industry", he adds.

Streit says that digital logic operating at speeds greater than 60 GHz is essential for telecommunications applications such as 40 $Gb.s^{-1}$ fibre optic chip sets and advanced frequency synthesizers.

The digital circuit was made using InP heterojunction bipolar transistors. A unique feature of these transistors is the removal of collector material beneath the base layer, resulting in a cantilevered base layer resting upon a pedestal-like collector layer. The greater the amount of cantilevering, the higher the speed of the frequency divider. TRW says the circuit dissipates only low amounts of power, combining high efficiency with high performance.

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Briefs...Briefs...

Solkatronic Chemicals has relocated its corporate offices to the expanded Morrisville, PA, USA site.

RF Micro Devices, Inc (RFMD) (Greensboro, NC, USA) has shipped its fifty millionth CDMA product. Also, RFMD launched the RF2365 3V HBT low-noise amplifier for digital cellular applications. The company has also recently been added to the Nasdaq-100 Index, effective from market opening 20 December 1999.

The market for satellite voice services is forecast to grow from an estimated installed base of 211 212 terminals at the end of 1999 to 8.32 million terminals by 2004, according to **Dataquest** Inc (San Jose, CA, USA). Ability to offer high data rates to smartphones etc. could kick-start the market.

Instruments S.A., the multinational instruments supplier, has changed its name to **Jobin Yvon/Horiba**.

American Xtal Technology (Fremont, CA, USA) has been ranked among Forbes Magazine's '200 Best Small Companies' published in November.